

CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

JANUARY 31, 2013

Western Hills Middle School

400 Phenix Avenue

EXECUTIVE SESSION 6:00 P.M.

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED BY PUBLIC MEETING

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED BY PUBLIC BUDGET WORK SESSION

MINUTES

This School Committee meeting was held on the evening of the above date in the auditorium of Western Hills Middle School with the following members present: Chairperson Iannazzi, Mrs. Ruggieri, Mrs. Culhane, Mr. Colford and Mr. Gale. Absent were Mrs. McFarland and Mr. Traficante.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. – It was moved by Mr. Colford and seconded by Mr. Gale to convene to Executive Session pursuant to RI State Laws:

- 1. PL 42-46-5(a)(1) Personnel**
- 2. PL 42-46-5(a)(2) Collective Bargaining and Litigation**
 - a. (Contract Negotiations Update – Secretaries, Teachers)**
- 3. PL 42-46-5(3) Security**

Call to Order – Public Session

The pledge of allegiance was conducted.

Roll Call – Quorum – the roll was called; there was a quorum present.

Executive Session Minutes Sealed – January 31, 2013

No votes were taken in executive session. A motion to seal the minutes was made by Mrs. Culhane; seconded by Mr. Colford. The roll was called; all were in favor.

Public Acknowledgements/Communications – none.

Chairperson's Communications – none.

Superintendent's Communications – none.

School Committee Member(s) Communications – none.

Public Hearing

a. Students (agenda/non-agenda matters) – none.

b. Members of the Public (agenda matters only)

Randall A. Paulhos, 16 Cortland Lane

Mr. Paulhos stated – I read over the resolution there and I am really surprised that you are backing a father/daughter dance when I am having trouble putting it on myself. I am doing it myself; it has nothing to do with the school. I made flyers up and when I was standing outside passing out the flyers I was told I could not do this. I

was not aware, my negligence. I read through the majority of the policies and see what you are referring to with general law and that talks about commercial so I have no idea why I could not hand out these flyers, it's non-profit. I thought this would prevent any problems for the school committee, for the schools, school district, for Woodridge and for the city of Cranston. I don't understand why I can't hand this out. All I wanted was for the opportunity for these kids to be able to come if they want to, even if they don't want to that is fine, and all the information is on it including my name, my phone number, my email address, if there were any questions. I went in and met with the principal of Woodridge and then I am approached by police officers from the Cranston police department. Now if I have researched since then and I have been made aware of the close to 900 pages of policies, and I really haven't found any reason why I won't be able to hand these out as it doesn't have anything to do with the school, it's private, it's not commercial, so I would like to have somebody explain that to me at some point so I can continue on with this. It's already been scheduled. I had followed what I was told later on, that I had to be in the playground to hand these out so I will talk to people up on the blacktop, I will go back down to the playground so I can hand them the paperwork and I don't understand what the difference is. If you think that I am trying to cause a problem for the school you are wrong. I did not want any publicity whatsoever. I went in and told Mrs. Josephs strictly as a courtesy that was all and she said okay, fine. In fact, the Cranston police officer said okay fine when he came out after speaking with her and then I was told through my wife that they were

considering arresting me and I really would have liked to have that done. What would the charge be? Handing out flyers for a father/daughter/sweetheart ball? I would appreciate it if someone can get back to me and tell me what the law is that covers this.

Steven Bloom, 54 Ingleside Avenue

Mr. Bloom stated – What is the format going to be for tonight? Is this the only opportunity to ask questions about the budget?

Mrs. Culhane replied – how has it always been for the two years that you did this?

Ms. Iannazzi stated the opportunity to speak is now.

Mr. Bloom stated – a few questions on the budget; I hope you will allow me if I go over three minutes to complete some of these questions. On the revenue page there is a forecast for \$40,000 in additional increases for other revenue; could someone please explain what the justification for the increase is and what the sources are for all those revenues?

Ms. Iannazzi stated – Mr. Bloom as you recall from your experiences on this side of the table; you can ask your questions and then during our budget hearing Mr. Balducci will answer them. There are no exchanges allowed at this point.

Mr. Bloom stated - in the superintendent's presentation she requested a raise and there have been a number of comments in the paper as well as on the part of the school committee as well as things that were reported. Many of the comments have been specifically identified at administrators. I would appreciate it if there was

clarification, as to what was the... and it is not clear in the presentation, of the \$1.6 million dollars which has been requested a raise, how much of that is for the administrators and how much of that is for the teachers?

Just in general I found the budget to be very reasonable. I would like to make some suggestions and I believe I have already forwarded them to the superintendent and Mr. Balducci and hope they will be considered and I will certainly forward them onto the school committee. I have one last comment, last week in the Providence Journal and I am quoting here; the quote was that one of the committee members was appalled and felt that the budget presentation was appalling and out of touch. There were similar comments that had been expressed and I will be perfectly honest, I found those comments to be appalling. I think it took a lot of courage for the superintendent to present the budget that she did. It is her responsibility to identify what she believes where the district should be investing its' resources and it is the responsibility, in my personal opinion, of the school committee to solve these funding problems. To tell the superintendent publically that what her presentation is appalling and more importantly out of touch and for no one on – for the remaining members on the school committee to not say anything about that is just as appalling. To be honest, I think the superintendent is owed an apology for those types of comments. It took a lot of courage to put together a budget like that and highlight where the district needs to be investing monies.

Consent Agenda/Consent Calendar - none

Action Calendar/Action Agenda

RESOLUTIONS

SPONSORED BY ANDREA IANNAZZI

NO. 13-1-16- Whereas the Cranston School Committee strongly supports the time honored tradition of father/daughter and mother/son events;

Whereas Federal Law (Title IX) allows for gender specific events as long as there are comparable events for each gender;

Whereas the Cranston School Committee has taken an oath to uphold the laws and Constitution of the United States and the State of Rhode Island, including RIGL 16-38-1.1, which prohibits gender specific events;

Be it resolved that the Cranston School Committee supports S0012, filed by Chairwoman Gallo, Senator Lombardi, Chairwoman Lynch, and Chairman DaPonte, which would modify state law to mirror federal law (Title IX);

And be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Cranston Legislative Delegation;

And be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to every parent teacher organization in Cranston with a request from the Cranston School Committee to contact the Cranston Legislative Delegation in support of this legislation.

Moved by Mrs. Culhane; seconded by Mr. Gale. The roll was called; all were in favor.

POLICY

NO. 13-1-17 – Resolved, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Flyer Distribution Policy #1327 (as amended), be approved for second reading (see amended policy attached).

Moved by Mrs. Ruggieri; seconded by Mr. Gale. The roll was called; all were in favor.

NO. 13-1-18 – Resolved, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Community Organization, Event and Youth Activity Announcement Policy #1328 (as amended), be approved for second reading (see amended policy attached).

Moved by Mrs. Ruggieri; seconded by Mr. Colford. The roll was called; all were in favor.

TABLED RESOLUTION

NO. 13-1-4- Resolved, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following certified personnel be appointed as principal of Waterman Elementary School. (Financial Impact Analysis attached).

Mary Caporelli

Effective Date: February 1, 2013

A motion to remove this from the table was made by Mrs. Culhane; seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri. The roll was called; all were in favor of removing this from the table.

Dr. Lundsten stated – I respectfully request to the school committee that I withdraw this resolution off the table tonight. There were no objections. Resolution was withdrawn.

Adjourn to Public Budget Work Session

Public Hearing on Proposed Budget for 2013-2014

Budget Questions

Mrs. Ruggieri asked – for last year's budget and the year before we had a city set aside money account for special education and in the first year that was held for special education funding. That account has been cut by the city. Why is there no specific line item for city set aside? I would like to ask that that money be held in that account for a minimum of two years and then we would see the trending of those costs.

Mr. Balducci stated – I did not want to put this money in a set-aside account only because of the fluxuation of one year to the next. Last year the city put aside \$700,000 and last year we did not use it. This year that was cut down to \$150,000 and with the support of the city council it was raised to \$370,000 where it is right now. Currently we

are trending around \$750,000 but it changes drastically from one year to the next.

Mrs. Culhane stated – I have to say that I think I would prefer to budget in the manner that we did the first year that we budgeted for that reserve and the reason why is because that number came specifically from the audit report. That was a recommendation from the audit report as a ways for us to preserve funding for special education costs. I think it is important, it is incumbent upon us to stress to the city, specifically to the mayor since he is the one who formulated the budget that defunded that by \$550,000 to express to them how important it is for us to have that reserve, how we do everything we can to be fiscally responsible. How those costs are out of our hands essentially which we know they are and I think that by not including that money...since the mayor didn't give us the money anyway for the second year I can't imagine if we don't budget for it he is just going to give it to us because we said we might need it. I think it is important for us to be dedicated to that number as Mrs. Ruggieri said at a minimum of another two years and actually put that number into the budget as that reserve account as recommended by the audit team.

Mr. Balducci replied – I don't disagree with that again there is a budget deliberation and in the amendments from the committee we will reassess.

Mrs. Ruggieri stated – in addition, when I was looking at some of

these other reductions and increases there were some questions. There was a reduction in projected student numbers and reduction in teams at the middle school level as part of a reduction in staff as savings and I did ask questions regarding that and based on that response I looked at it and I looked back at some of our capped classroom numbers that we have and my concern is that while looking at the numbers that we have for next year and to consolidate teams and look at teams of 25, that coming down the pike when looking at the current 3rd grade...I am concerned that this approach might work for one year because those numbers are low but moving forward I wonder what that will make those classrooms look like in a few years. Right now I'm looking at our middle schools. While I recognize that there are things that we could be doing better at our middle schools I think that our middle schools run well and I think the fact that they work and are meeting the needs of students I think the flow they have is a good one and I am concerned that by breaking these teams down and making the classrooms larger I am concerned that there is no long term projection or no long term plans if those numbers start to grow and we end up with 30 kids in a classroom and to be honest with you my daughter this year had 30 kids in her computer tech classroom and they had to bring in an aide to the classroom because there were just too many kids in the classroom. While I know this number is not that high for a core classroom I wonder what that would do for a core class. I would like to see more projections.

Dr. Lundsten stated – we would be more than willing to take a look at

that again and project that out.

Discussion ensued regarding classroom sizes and PARCC.

Ms. Iannazzi explained to the audience the procedure of how the school committee members present budget questions to the executive staff and how the executive staff answers their questions via memos which are then those answers are sent to every school committee member.

Ms. Nota explained the breakdown of numbers at the middle school, intervention courses or programs, demands by the state requiring our students to have the necessary skills in math and ELA's and the need to be proficient, and the need in 11th grade to pass the NECAP test in order to graduate.

Dr. Lundsten spoke about her 90 day plan, part of the 90 day plan is to go out to the schools and look at the data to do an analysis to see what we need to do to improve education across the district and putting interventions in place to help with these math scores and looking to support students and making sure interventions are in place so that everyone can graduate on time.

Mrs. Culhane asked – is part of the thinking is shifting some of the this to the 6th grade that will help elevate issues in middle school which will lessen the “damage” or changing the program and increasing those teams is that what the rationale behind it is? Or preventative in 6th grade and it will be easier in 7th grade and is that

for the long term or are we doing this to see maybe over the next couple of years what kind of increases we will have at the middle school and then in the high school.

Ms. Nota stated- in our research it really starts in kindergarten with intervention programs such as Rtl comes in. We have to look at how we do business at the elementary level. Graduation is not going to happen in high school; graduation starts in kindergarten. We are altering our curriculum to accommodate the common core standards etc. Ms. Nota also spoke about the course(s) twenty-four of our elementary teachers are taking through Rhode Island College.

Dr. Lundsten also spoke about building capacity at the elementary level to support the middle school and high school. Along with the work we are doing with the DANA Center and the University of Texas.

Mrs. Ruggieri asked- what would the consolidation of the foreign language teachers look like?

Ms. Nota stated – At the middle level students take foreign language as part of their program. If they take the extra math they would not be able to take a foreign language.

Discussion ensued regarding the validity of taking a foreign language at the different grade levels.

Mrs. Ruggieri discussed the ELL population and the direct costs to the city and how it is costing more to educate our children. For example – the ELL directors' salary is \$96,000 and a translator will

cost \$8,700 (part-time). In addition to that Mrs. Ruggieri discussed the plans for the schools in warning status and the costs associated with those plans - that money comes out of our budget as well.

Dr. Lundsten stated – (about the warning schools)

It is my understanding that the six schools that are in warning status, one is a focus school. The schools that are Title I we can draw amendments adjusting funding to support the changes that will need to be made. The changes to each of these schools are different because there are warnings for different schools. The three schools that are not Title schools, I've been told this verbally but I have not seen this in writing, that there is going to be funding available that we can apply for. We reached out to RIDE again to ask them to clarify that and we were told they would get back to us in about a month as to how we could access those monies. It is my understanding “that there would be \$30,000 to \$40,000 available for each school to help us implement these plans.”

If they do not come forth with that money then we are going to need to look to help support these schools to move forward. The other thing you need to know about the warning schools is even if our NECAP scores or the changes take place rapidly they will stay in warning for two years and that is a RIDE requirement so you need to know that. Even though they are working hard to improve and they are improving as we move along, they will keep them in warning for two years.

Mrs. Culhane stated – this is more of a commentary then a question. I

just think it is important to note, piggyback on what Mrs. Ruggieri said in the superintendent's budget presentation – is that available on the website? Dr. Lundsten replied yes.

Mrs. Culhane continued – I would encourage everybody to take a look at it. As far as our demographics everybody just always presumes that there are these hidden costs in our budget and we are asking for more money because the schools are always looking to be greedy but I think it is important to note, and I was shocked when this was presented to us at a meeting a few months back, in 2005 for free and reduced lunch population we had 23.8% of our students in the district receiving free and reduced lunch. In 2013 we have 41.7% of our Cranston Public Schools students receiving free and reduced lunch. Of all of our, I believe, 26 or 27 schools in the districts, all but three had a huge proportion of students receiving free and reduced lunch. Let me repeat that, all but three schools so when you think about where your kids go to school, depending on who you are in this crowd, your kids may be in one of those schools and you don't even really realize it. The impact that the changing demographic is having on the costs on the city-side and also on the school-side is huge and it needs to be mentioned because we're not just looking for more money because we're looking to drain the coffers of the city, our demographic is changing and for RIDE or the city or for anybody to discredit that, really is just putting blinders on so I hope that everybody realizes that and really pays attention to the needs of the students in our city; 41.7%, I have to say that again are receiving free and reduced lunch. It is mind boggling to think that many people in

our city are living in poverty.

Ms. Iannazzi stated – before we get to one more question I just want to request for the next hearing for the administration some more detailed analysis of the projected population growth over the next five years and if you could specifically try to graph it or chart it by the middle school so we can analyze more closely the potential cuts at the middle school level.

Mrs. Ruggieri stated – Not sure if this can be answered tonight or it is something I could get an answer on at a later date but I'm looking to see if we have noticed an increase in our service provider costs due to the increased needs of our population?

Dr. Lundsten replied – when you are asking for service provider costs are we talking about special ed costs?

Mrs. Ruggieri stated – All of our special ed costs, ELL and all of those...any of our I guess outside regular classroom service providers kind of...social workers, guidance counselors, any of those. I's like to see if there is any kind of link of increased costs for that.

Dr. Lundsten stated- one increased cost is in the budget - we put in an additional nurse and there were 5 positions, an additional nurse and an additional occupational therapist. Mrs. Coogan could you comment on that please?

Mrs. Coogan stated – Yes, we did put in a request for an additional nurse and at this time we have a full-time nurse at East, West, Bain, Park View, Western Hills, Orchard Farms, Stone Hill, Garden City and Gladstone. We have a full-time nursing program supervisor and 19 nurses. Nine nurses cover 9 schools full-time. That leaves 10 nurses to cover the remaining 14 schools, Norwood Avenue as well as three non-public schools for a total of 18 locations which fragments those 10 people across 18 locations and those fragments vary according to the nursing needs of the students in those buildings so that increase of the 1.0 is needed to help reduce that fragmentation across the buildings. What we are seeing is an increase of the kinds of healthcare needs in each of the buildings that are increasing on students that have more fragile health needs in buildings and an increase in the number of children with diabetes, students with epi-pen needs, etc. and that's just based on healthcare plans, etc., things that we dated that we can count. That's one increase. The increase in the terms of the request for the occupational therapist is that we currently have 234 students that are receiving direct and monitored services; there are 179 students with direct service and 55 students who are monitored. That is an increase of 30 students from September to this point, which, according to our special education plan which we have to submit to RIDE every year, from year to year we have to submit a plan that says how many students each of the various service providers will have on their caseload. For occupational therapists we say they will have 35 students as a maximum caseload; that's almost a full-time position right there and

we're at that point at 30 at this point in the school year so that's the justification.

Ms. Iannazzi stated – kind of piggybacking on that a little bit; I was thinking earlier today about what type of budget presentation we could give to the council and I think one of the themes that we could stress is doing more with less because I think every single employee of Cranston Public Schools' has had to increase their workload and perhaps some of the data that we could begin to pull in preparation for that presentation is just over the last several years how the caseload of each specialized itinerant has increased, example in 2000 whatever the speech language pathologist averaged so many children and today they are averaging this and the same going through the line just to demonstrate how much more our employees are doing to save tax payers' money.

Mrs. Ruggieri stated – yes, if we could just maybe every three months or so if you are noticing increases in population, if we could get ...

Mrs. Coogan replied – sure, we have all of the service providers provide monthly reports to their program supervisors and then they provide me with a monthly report so I monitor those on a monthly basis.

Mrs. Culhane stated – so I am looking at the questions from Mrs. McFarland and it is about the significant dollar increases and so I have a question on a couple of them. The substitute increase is \$98,000; I'm going to ask for a couple of them individually, I don't know if you want to take them one at a time, I'm just looking to see

why that one was created.

Mr. Balducci stated – last year we ended the year approximately \$300,000 in the hole in substitutes. This year, when the state finalized their state aid allocation to us, we were luckily enough to be on the positive side of that equation and I was able to squirrel away in this years' budget \$170,000 in teacher substitute. So, I am trying as much as possible to bring that level of the budget to where it needs to be so this is my attempt to bring it to a level where hopefully, next year, I can tell you that we did not overspend the budget.

Mrs. Culhane continued – the next one is the fire alarm maintenance. There is an increase of \$48,500.

Mr. Balducci stated – it's actually not an increase, we were paying for it out of other accounts but this is again one of those UCOA corrections where now they require me to identify this as a stand-alone or an area specific in the budget. So what I was doing, the areas where I was paying for that, I tried to chip away at it and steal some money so if I had to increase this one I stole some money elsewhere in the budget to accommodate.

Mrs. Culhane asked – is that a fee that is paid to the fire department? I mean who does fire alarm maintenance and why it is almost costing us \$50,000 a year...they're not our buildings so....

Mr. Balducci replied – we are required to have them inspected. I don't know if it is once a year or twice a year so I apologize for that; I will find that out. But we do have a private company do that and it is not paid to the fire department it is paid to the company.

Mrs. Culhane asked – is that potentially, you know, like Mrs. Ruggieri said, not our buildings and have we battled this before with the city?

Mr. Balducci stated – my understanding is we have care, custody and control of the building.

Mrs. Culhane stated – I've got three more – the non-public textbooks increase of \$20,000?

Mr. Balducci stated – again, looking at what we spent this year, unfortunately we were over budget this year based on the requests that came in. Again, it is my attempt to bring it to a level where...

Mrs. Culhane interjected – is that where most of these are because the next one was about transportation repairs, supplies, and then plant custodial supplies, is that what they were too to bring us up to budget.

Mr. Balducci stated – or down, whichever way you look at it.

Mrs. Culhane continued – and then the Medicaid consulting costs went down \$7,000, what was that reflective of?

Mr. Balducci stated- again, if you look at the revenue side we are reflecting less coming in from the service, their fee is a percentage.

Mr. Gale asked – at the end of the budget, the individual school expenses. I'm just wondering why there seems to be a fluxuation among the different line items on both up and down with the funding. For example if you look at Rhodes equipment, I am assuming that is saying, on page 8, of 58, it is down almost \$3,500 and then if you look

at Dutemple, the same line item, Dutemple equipment, it's up \$653.00.

Why is there such a disparity?

Mr. Balducci stated – basically there are three holding accounts at each school for their annual order allocations. The amount of money we give to each school for their supply needs, possibly if they are lucky enough that they budget for replacement of a copier for example. So we at the elementary level may budget approximately \$75.00 per student, we do that times the number of students at each location and say to that particular school okay, you have \$10,000. We leave it up to them how they want to allocate that so they communicate to my office, okay, Joe, put \$7,000 in textbooks, put \$2,000 in text supplies, and put the balance in equipment. So from one year to the next again, it's just based on...it could be a change in enrollment and based what the principal feels the needs of the school are.

Mr. Colford stated – First of all, this is something I just want to talk a little bit about myself. I'm just a concerned parent, I've been living in Cranston for about 11 years now and I'm just a burger guy. I'm the guy who goes out every day and it trying to sell hamburgers and I got into this because my wife and I moved to Cranston originally because of the school system, you do an outstanding job and I've been very pleased and we've been very pleased with the job they've done. I never really saw myself sitting up here on this side of the table but I felt that you know what, maybe I've got something to offer here and understand this, I think the job that you guys do as school committee

members, I applaud you for the amount of commitment that you give, the amount of time and effort that you put in and the concern that not only do you do not only for the students especially but for the citizens of Cranston and for all of the teachers and administrators that we have. I'm kind of like a bottom line type of guy. I go in and I look and I say alright, how do we make this better, faster, cheaper. That's kind of where I come from and I think that...real quick I look at the budget where we were in 2010 at \$121.6 million and then in 2011 we're in \$126 million and we're at \$129 million in 2012, and our projected this year is \$133.6 million and next year we projecting right now is \$140.2 million and I say okay we're going to continue at \$4 to \$5 million dollars every year and some of these costs are built in and there are challenges there. I guess my question is to the team is how do we go out there and how do we challenge everybody on our team, I think we have almost 1,000 teachers, administrators and people that we work with, and we're responsible for 10,682 students, how do we give them the best possible product? So as I look at this I say okay, well we continue to add in 4\$ million dollars every year – how do we get the best possible return. I've got to say, and I only have a little tiny window of what I have looked at, you do an outstanding job. There are some teachers, whatever we are paying them; it's not enough without a doubt. We have some others that maybe we need to work on some of their performances and I won't name any of those teachers either. I think there is an opportunity there but I guess one of the things that I know a lot of my constituents ask me about is, Trent, what happened to the music programs, and the sports in middle

schools? How do we get that back? Now, it is my understanding we owe about \$3.7 million left on that loan I guess and help me out...we're not allowed to put those back in until that is paid off correct? Okay, so I guess I'm asking, we are looking to increase this years' budget by \$6.2 million which is the biggest increase in probably the last 4 or 5 years. Out of that we can't somehow move that \$3.7 million, take that loan off the table, put those programs back in. Still allows us for, you know, \$2.7 million or so to utilize as increases in this budget. I am leading up to my question I guess is, how much have we funded our teachers' pensions, are they at 100% funding?

Mr. Balducci replied – all of our teachers and non-certified staff belong to a state-wide, except again for new hires on behalf of the custodial staff, so again yes, I get a bill once a month and we pay it once a month so it is totally funded.

Mr. Colford stated – so they are at 100%. Excellent. I guess to me I just look down, I am a bottom line guy, we are looking to increase most of this stuff. Dr. Lundsten has put together a tremendous budget here. Maybe pretty much 1% on the line items and you know the cost of living etc. is probably much higher than that so it is a challenge. You look and you say okay here is what's eating up our budget, how do we utilize these dollars, how do we move these dollars around, how can we be more efficient at what we are trying to do and I guess that is my challenge to my school committee members and a challenge to myself and the teachers out there and the administrators out there, how can we be more efficient with the

dollars that we do have and continue to provide an outstanding product. I can get into some line items. One of the things that Andrea you asked me to do is to be on the Capital Appropriations or Buildings Committee and I look at it and we have about \$69,000 in there maybe. I know there are some outstanding bonds and I don't know who I would ask to try and get that \$750,000...

Ms. Iannazzi stated – Mr. Colford we are so proud to welcome you to the team and seeing as how you ran on the mayor's ticket we are really going to encourage you to use that leverage that you have with the mayor...

Mr. Colford replied – I will and he is going to challenge us to find some other dollars on some other line items.

Ms. Iannazzi stated – and we can work together to do that but the mayor does propose a capital budget. We submit our requests the mayor comes back with usually less than what we request but that is the process.

Mr. Colford continued – so I guess what I am asking is there a way for us to possibly pay off this loan now so we don't have to wait until 2017 to have our kids you know back in some of those programs that are very important for their development.

Ms. Iannazzi stated – Mr. Colford I am pleased that you asked that and I am sure that Ms. Larkin could probably answer this question a little more eloquently than I could but going back we attempted to do so and it was met with resistance from the mayor and the council at that time. So that is probably a legal discussion that we can have in executive session one day to explain to you what occurred in

executive session with the council and what occurred in executive session with the school committee.

Mr. Colford stated- so we don't have control of that whole \$140 million dollars we are protecting?

Ms. Iannazzi stated – first of all that is the superintendent's proposal; it is not the school committees' and there are a lot of ifs. There is the state aid if, the city aid if, and it is a moving target essentially until June.

Mr. Colford stated – my next question – on our state funding, I believe we are funded about \$39 million is that correct? Mr. Balducci replied – projected – correct.

Mr. Colford continued – how certain are we that the state will continue to fund at that level; are they required to commit to that number and then there is no way that can change? That could change? Mr. Balducci stated – the good news is they created a fair-funding formula which we are in the positive end of that equation in the tune of \$3.5 million dollars each year but I believe it is from one year to the next it is up to the legislation whether they want to fully fund the fair-funding formula. We just hope and pray from one year to the next.

Mr. Colford asked – what is your sense of the legislation now and the makeup of it?

Mr. Balducci replied – the budget that was submitted from RIDE to the governor requested and I believe the governor came out in full support of his intention to support fund next years' obligation and

that is the \$3.5 million dollar increase you see in the budget.

Mrs. Culhane stated – I think that a lot of the questions that you both are asking are very reminiscent of questions that Janice and I first asked when we were on....I'm not going to use the term freshmen. But what I would like to say a couple of things to Mr. Colford; I think that one of the biggest things with adding back the programs and I think we touched upon this a little bit. One of the things that I would like to see and I think everybody on this committee, both as committee members and as parents want to see is a plan in place to make these programs, not to just add the programs back because the programs the way they were – were clearly not seen as viable regardless of whether or not we thought they were viable. They were not seen either by RIDE or the city as being viable programs so what I want to see is programs that will never be called 'nice to haves' again by anybody. I have a huge bone to pick that that phrase was even uttered from somebody to claims to be pro-education because as a parent and as a tax payer and as a school committee member I know that those aren't nice to haves; those are the things that make our school district shine. So what I would propose and what I think is something that we have all talked about within this next year or so is to come up with a plan to look at the programs that were cut and to have them reenter the system in such a way that they will be better, they will be more aligned to curriculum and that they will never be cut again because they will be viable programs. So I think that is one thing that we need to focus on as a committee. I think it is something

that we need to work on but it's something that we need to be committed to doing. In so far as the state budget issue, I'd like to think that many of the legislatures, particularly our state delegation is very pro education and I have a good feeling they will support fully funding the funding formula but I'd like you to keep in mind and I am not sure if you are aware of this but in the 2010-2011 school year...see the way we do our budget for those of you that don't know, we work completely backwards. We create a budget, we have no idea what the mayor is going to say and the mayor has no idea what the state is going to say so it's all basically...it would be like somebody saying to me, well, you know Mrs. Culhane in January you're going to make \$50,000 a year, I'm a case manager, I don't make that kind of money, but and then in June come and say, we're only going to give you \$30,000 and that's what happened in 2010-2011, we created our budget and then six months into the school year the state cut our funding by \$960,000. We had already planned on spending the money and then we were told unfortunately by the city you have to eat that money. Well the city realized they were wrong, we've worked out a legal plan and we have that money back now but that sort of the thing we need to anticipate. Nothing is ever carved in stone either with the city or with the state so it's something that we need to keep in mind. Once the city passes their budget then we know what we have to cut and we are bound to that. But once it goes to the state, they could come down and weigh into the budget process once we've already started spending that money and cut it. A lot of people don't realize that. It's such a backward system the way the state works. But it is a

very vulnerable budget which why we have a deficit here, deficit there, when we are getting cut money while our costs are increasing; that's where the holes are left.

Mr. Colford stated – I certainly appreciate that information. Thank you. Where do we leave ourselves flexibility if that happens again and we have that \$900,000 deficit?

Mrs. Culhane stated – that is one of those things where back with the old budget format Janice and I both used to do this, we would have the highlighter, the pen, and a modest glass of wine maybe and look through every single line item. Mrs. Schiff in the back would come with her list of twenty-five line items of what's this, can we move this, can we move that. The new UCOA and you can't really do that and I miss the old way because I liked being able to see where every single dollar was. This is supposed to be a better format, I don't think it is a better format and Mr. Balducci doesn't either. But what I think we all need to really understand here is there was a lot of talk about the zero based budgeting issue with UCOA you can't really do that. There is no need really to reinvent the wheel because we know within so many dollars what the costs are going to be from year to year and there is not a lot of wiggle room. I would love to be able to say you are going to look at this budget, take it home and say, I found two million dollars but when I tell you having done this, this is my fifth budget season, there is very, very little wiggle room and unfortunately the wiggle room comes in cuts to programming and to people's paychecks. That's really, honestly the only places it comes from. I would like to think that we could sit here, and maybe we can with

some new fresh blood and ideas, maybe we will be enlightened but I was one of the people who thought I was going to do a lot of enlightening and here we sit so...

Mr. Balducci stated – there were a couple of questions asked previously and I would like to answer them at this time – as far as the other revenue category – the \$40,000 increase is not assigned to any particular area, again, it's just looking at historical information, how we have been performing in that area of the budget so I felt comfortable increasing it from its \$260,000 current level up to a \$300,000 level. If you look at the previous years' you will see that we took in much more than again the original budgeted so again it was a conservative increase but I feel it is on target. The other question I was asked was in regards to the raise, how much of it was assigned to teachers vs. administrators. This is just the salary and not the associated benefit but the teachers are \$1.46. When someone asked about administrators, I have two types, certified and non-certified; certified administrators, just over \$73,000 and non-certified administrators just under \$20,000.

Ms. Iannazzi stated – and Mr. Balducci just to further clarify that line item includes other groups as well? Mr. Balducci stated – several other groups as well, yes.

Mrs. Culhane stated – to go along too with the idea about our capital building budget improvement. Just to kind of bring you up to speed on some things you may not be aware of. Back, I think we're going

back six years or eight years ago there was a referenda for a bond that the citizens of this city and I say this every budget season so you vets must be sick of hearing me say this, it was approved by the voters of this city through the electoral process to approve \$9 million dollars for improvements to our science labs at the middle schools and here we sit on January 31, 2013 and the bond has not been sold and we ask every single year and every single year we hear it's not a good bond season, or now the costs overrun the \$9 million dollars. We could certainly ask Joel to share with you and I am certain he will as the process goes on, the millions and millions of dollars of capital improvements that we need and so we kind of cherry pick each year. In the last couple of budget years we've been denied; we've been denied repairing things like blacktops at schools so I don't see those science labs coming anytime soon even though the voters said they wanted them.

Mr. Gale stated – this may be going along with what Mrs. Culhane but I do know one of the things that need to be done is to replace the windows at Park View. I attended Park View and left there in 1985 and I believe those windows that need to be replaced were there when I was there in 1985 just to give you a sense of what is going on.

Non-Agenda Speakers

Steven Bloom, 54 Ingleside Drive, Cranston

Mr. Bloom stated – just one quick question – the superintendent's

contract features a performance evaluation that is supposed to be made objective sometime within 18 months after her contract was executed has there been anything set up? Subcommittees or anything to start working on that particular process?

Dr. Lundsten stated – Mr. Bloom as you know there was a 90 day entrance plan, I've just about finished. I have met with the last person I had to meet with on that list that was approved by the school committee, actually this morning, so I will be presenting that next week to the school committee. I am moving forward on the strategic plan and it was my direction that I was going to go in was to ask the committee to set up a subcommittee to start putting that evaluation piece together because obviously I would like to know what I am going to be measured on. Thank you for requesting that.

Mr. Bloom stated – thank you superintendent for answering that but my question is really directed to the school committee because it is their responsibility. Hopefully something will be put together to that effect because that is 18 months which means that is about a year from now that the superintendent is owed the objective type of evaluation.

Allan Davis, 65 Oaklawn Avenue, Cranston

Mr. Davis stated – new guy on the block...actually Mr. Colford asked a lot of questions I was going to ask which eliminated...these are not any type of national security type of questions, just trying to get an idea of the process. At the beginning of the meeting you seal the

executive session minutes, is that a law requirement or is that a policy of the school board?

Ms. Iannazzi replied – it is an open meetings act requirement but also I am also violating that by answering your questions. As we would have been by answering Mr. Bloom's questions as Mr. Bloom recalls from his time on the school committee there are no exchanges allowed so if you have questions about issues that are on the agenda we can answer them but if you have questions about issues that are not on the agenda it's an open meetings violation for the school committee to then engage in dialog about that conversation because that topic has not been advertised for the public to know that we would be discussing it.

Mr. Davis stated – I signed up for non-agenda questions.

Ms. Iannazzi stated – right, you can submit the questions, we just can't provide answers at a meeting.

Ms. Davis stated – so if something comes up I can ask a question but I would have to wait a month until the next meeting to get an answer back so I'm only allowed to make a comment then my comment is that policy sucks.

Ms. Iannazzi stated- Mr. Davis, it is a state law; but you can absolutely leave your name, your phone number, your address, your email address, however, you'd like your communication to be responded to and we will respond to any questions you may have. You can leave your questions with either of the Gail's and the entire school committee will be provided with copies.

Mr. Davis stated – okay, I do have a couple of comments then

regarding the privatization of the buses I am assuming I can comment on that it wasn't on the agenda. My comment to that is I don't know where that stands and I'm not here to tell you pro or con having worked for the city for twenty years I'm going to caution the school board not to delegate all of that privatization all in one shot. There is no company out there that is going to have the people and the equipment to cover all of these bus routes all on the first day of school. We're going to have kids that going to be left stranded in schools, I would strongly urge that if you are going to go to privatization route that you do it in pieces. Do the high schools and junior high schools first because if something goes wrong these kids are a little bit older and a little bit better capable of taking care of themselves. Before you move into the lower levels make sure they have the people that are there...you know...one of the advantages of having your own transportation system is you have a handful of people who are involved. There are people within our own school system that are school bus drivers that have had alcohol issues, drug issues, prescription drug issues, that get weeded out over the years. You're not going to have that ability if you do it in masse to make sure that the children here are going to be safe with the amount of new people and new equipment that they are going to need to hire. Are you allowed to tell me who the grant writer is for the town?

In so far as the demographics that were mentioned about the number of kids that are currently in poverty. I am going to recommend that the school board just not add up the total number of kids receiving

and assuming that is the total number of people that are living in poverty in the town. The census bureau did a new census, I don't know if you have the ability to get any of that information in regards to what is the total number in the census of people in Cranston because right now with the economy being in the tank and the reported number of people that are taking advantage of social services around the country has doubled in the last four or five years and that is not because people have moved, that just because people are becoming more aware of it. It's like did the crime rate go up or are people just reporting the crimes that they never did before. Those people have been there all along and you would be better able to budget what the total number is verses the number that is actually receiving. It may give you a better idea of what you are going to need to look for in the future. Get an independent source so that no one can accuse anybody here of padding the numbers. There was a comment made by Ms. Nasse – PBGR? Ms. Nota stated – Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements.

Mr. Davis continued – and to Mr. Colford when you are looking for the music program; I am a big fan; I have two children in the music program in the high school; around the country where there is a college requirement for a job, a lot of places take military service in place of college. I would wonder in that place of with the standards that are currently required for a child to have x number of foreign language would a music substituted for the foreign language at the 6, 7, and 8 grade levels be acceptable in itself as language and I would

wonder if that would make this whole thing a viable program if we took...my children both took Spanish, Spanish I was the hardest thing that...three years of Spanish I for one of my sons was the hardest thing he ever went through. But his musical ability is tremendous. If that is a possibility I would suggest to you that the music program could become viable through the language program. I don't know whether it can be done or not, I'm just thinking off the top of my head. But you are looking for new ideas, if someone could...Mr. Colford if you have the opportunity ...maybe you're allowed to address me back at a future meeting.

Mr. Colford stated – I am taking a lot of notes. I'm certainly going to look into it.

Mr. Davis continued – I will submit my list of very simple questions via email.

Kerri Kelleher – 83 Freedom Drive, Cranston

Ms. Kelleher stated – sadly I want to mention a budget item that I didn't see in the budget that sadly would also involve money. It resolves around some of my concerns of safety in the schools. I understand that the superintendent, mayor's office and police department is working on some of the issues in the buildings. However, I am assuming these are repairs and these improvements to our facilities are going to cost money. I don't know if there are plans for grant money or if there is going to be federal money available but it is this consideration being addressed? Along that as well, I am concerned about the capacity and stress we are putting on our

school secretaries in our buildings. In going through the budget, school by school, the salaries of these secretaries and what we are now requiring of them, I think is unfair, they are school nurses; they are now photocopying every driver's license of everyone who comes into the building. They are now responsible for making visual checks of people that are walking to the building. They are answering the phone, they are taking care of students' needs, and at some point they are actually doing the jobs they were expected to do, filing, and assisting people in the building. Our school, I am at Woodridge, isn't even one of the biggest schools in the district and what I see our secretary go through on a daily basis, just when I am in the building, is overwhelming. I don't know what kind of consideration or restructuring can be done or if part-time aides can be brought in but you're single handily relying on the school secretaries' for the security of these buildings. They are visually responsible for any person that gets in and I'm not speaking for them or for their union but it doesn't seem to be what you would sign up for when you look to be a secretary. So I am hoping there would be some consideration and a plan going in to give these people the support they need to be successful in their job whether that's an assistant, or more nurses, or better security or whatever the case may be. We would like to know what the plan is at some point.

Richard Tomlins, 400 Farmington Avenue, Cranston

Mr. Tomlins stated – oh, it's going to be a fun year. I attended the council meetings, they got five new members, two of which are

retreads, they have their built in prejudices, you have two members here, I think proposed and maybe funded by the opposition so it's going to be fun to watch and see what happens. I also thought maybe we were going to have a different seating arrangement here tonight. I am sort of a word merchant; I'm not a William Safire, I couldn't hold one of his socks, remember I said one, but when a word like appalling is used, dreadful, horrible, horrifying, horrific, awful, terrible, dire, grim, dismaying, horrid, frightful, and on and on it goes. Now, I don't think Ms. Iannazzi really meant that for you, maybe she did, but you know if anybody has to work together it's you two. You are the keys actually to this committee. Any president of a committee like this has the responsibility and the duty to work as closely as possible with administration so I hope that was just an anomaly and we will go forward from there. If it wasn't then you will act accordingly. If I was just tuning into this thing tonight I would just say, I don't know how we do anything for education. I don't know how we do any programs, any teaching, I hear so much of what we have to be faced with. If I was in charge I would blow up RIDE, I really would. It is ridiculous that somebody is dictating to a school of responsible school superintendent, administrators, that we are paying good taxpayers' money for and then they tie their hands for what we as citizens, as taxpayers, expect them to do. So what I am saying is there has got to be a fight here. Somebody's got to stand up. Go to the newspapers, do whatever you can. Ms. Iannazzi knows all about calling the police, I'll get involved. Let them call anybody. I'll go to jail for a few days if that's what it takes. We cannot sit back and have education ruined by

a bunch of people who really aren't educators, they are just political plum jobs that are trying to dictate to this school committee and all over the country but I am only interested in this one, its bad enough to think about one never mind everyone. But you can't sit here and pontificate, you can't sit here and use public relations for us, we know basically what you are up against and what you are doing otherwise we wouldn't be here but we're not even a small majority. We're no majority. What has to be done because you see what it gets into is it confuses you. When you are dictated to then you have to look for other things and when somebody comes down with one thing then it expands it seems. I heard a situation about nursing that we have 10 nurses to cover 14 schools. My God, when I think about that. We didn't have any nurses, if you could possibly get an aspirin, I don't know why I'm here, and I should have been vaporized long ago. I shouldn't stand here. When I hear that everything that you are trying to do for our students, none of that happened to me. I should not be standing here and neither should my wife who I will publically state is a few years older.

Ms. Iannazzi stated – Mr. Tomlins you are going to have a difficult night. Meg (Fraser) is going to print a front page story about how you're blowing up RIDE, the state police are coming to your house, and your wife is going to be upset with you.

Mr. Tomlins replied – I couldn't say this publically but I paid her to do it and the same thing goes with the way you work for the city, it's ridiculous to think you have these two entities, somebody has to come out of their shell and go up there and march in the office and

raise holy heck because you can't have competing entities for the same dollars in the city and education has to be first. If we don't educate our students, you don't need any council, you don't need anything. That is number one. So you have to stand up and fight for it but happens is it gets into sometimes a competitive area that it shouldn't because of what they say and what you say, you got to follow up they have to follow up, you know it wasn't long ago there was an awful lot of name calling actually and I mean real name calling but attend those meetings, stand up as a citizen. At one time somebody said school committee member can't stand up there and talk because...because what, there's a first amendment right in this city. Get up there, plead your case and it shouldn't even be a matter of pleading because you know what has to be done. We are not taking enough action as a community but obviously the main responsibility is yours and we have to go after the state even on the federal. It is ridiculous. Wait and see what comes out federally now. We have 41 federal programs now; they are talking about more and more for education. Oh boy do I love to hear that but I know it is meaningless because it is never going to get into the classrooms. We're not talking about students and when we talk about math, my God, my understanding is for years that when they get into the first grade, when they are five years old they are pretty much developed to the extent that what they have socializing and so forth in those great little minds and brains of theirs by the fourth grade we lose them. Why do we have to say we have to have special math programs for God's sake? That was part of education since somebody left Chicago. I

don't understand all that and maybe somebody can explain it to me. Now you are saying because the state has come up with new...well tell the state that you're doing your job. Let them come after you. We'll get a fund going, first of all get you bailed out and then we'll defend you but we have to stand up and fight for what is right. I'm going to keep saying that till I vaporize.

Debbie Flitman, Alpine Estates, Cranston

Ms. Flitman stated – I do agree with Mr. Tomlins today on one thing and that is education has to be first. Not blowing up RIDE or anything like that.

I do want to address this conversation that I heard tonight about the math intervention and students not living up to the NECAP benchmark. I served on the CEAB here, the Cranston Education Advisory Board, for a year and what I heard there appalled me. What I hear my neighbors' saying appalls me. For years apparently parents have been telling their children NECAP's don't matter, NECAP's matter. I've told my children every single day since we moved to Rhode Island, NECAP's matter, everything matters, every single test matters. So I think that something you need to consider when you are talking about the students not living up to the benchmark in terms of their proficiency in math, it's a conversation maybe you need to have with the parents of this community, parents that have been telling their children NECAP's don't matter; they matter. The only other thing I wanted to say is I heard that tonight that we keep cutting from the students' programs that we have in our schools and now we have

next to nothing, the basic education program. There are two distinct places that we can cut, that is the privatization of the transportation system and privatizing of our custodial people. It's done in Massachusetts, it's done in other states, even the privatization of transportation is done in other communities and works well in other communities here in Rhode Island, works so well they even have late buses so that students who wish to stay after school to enjoy some club afterschool or other activity, they have a late bus. So I think this is something you can consider. I just briefly looked through the budget and those are millions of dollars. You know I think you need to be here to represent our students and to consider the taxpayers and how much tax we pay and to use our money wisely.

Future Meeting Dates – February 11, and February 14, 2013.

Adjourn Work Session

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Gale; seconded by Mrs. Culhane. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea M. Iannazzi

Chairperson

Flyer Distribution Policy #1327 (amended)

The Cranston School Department adheres to the law describing restrictions on commercial activity and fundraising in public schools. RI General Laws 16-36-6 et. Seq. and has instituted the following procedures for the public to obtain permission to distribute flyers and announcements within Cranston Public Schools.

- Only school related activities will be distributed through students. School related activities include but are not limited to: School Lunch menus, class and school pictures, PTA/PTO/FEN activities, book sales and book fairs.**
- City, State and Federal Government organizations are excluded from these restrictions.**
- Flyers must meet the requirements stated in the Community Organization, Event and Youth Activity Announcement Policy (#1328) put forth by Cranston Public Schools.**
- Community organizations, events or Youth Activity flyers may be distributed through schools via paper and/or listserv until June 17, 2013. As has been the practice in Cranston Public Schools District any organizations wishing to distribute flyers through the schools in paper form must make and pay for their own copies. Copies must be separated in batches of 25 and must be delivered to each school by the organization. Schools will not make copies of flyers.**

- Beginning June 18th, 2013 all approved announcements and flyers will be available for distribution through each school via listserv. Approved announcements and flyers will also be available on the CPSED.NET website page under the Community Organizations tab.
- Families who do not have access to the internet will be able to find information on the Community Board at their school.

First reading: January 22, 2013 Cranston Public Schools

Resolution No. 13-1-14 Cranston, Rhode Island

Policy Adopted/Amended: January 31, 2013

Resolution No. 13- 1-17

**Community Organization, Event and Youth Activity Announcement
Policy # 1328 (amended)**

The Cranston School Department has instituted the following procedures to obtain permission to post links on the Cranston Public Schools Website (CPSED.NET) and distribution on School Listservs.

- 1) Requests for posting of links to websites shall be limited to: In-state community organizations, community events and other youth-related activities.**
- 2) City, State, and/or Federal Government organizations are excluded from these restrictions.**

- 3) The request must be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent (or his/her designee) of Cranston Public Schools along with a completed application available on the CPSED.net website for review and potential approval. Current non-profit status must be included with the application. Approval for posting is not guaranteed.**
- 4) Only non-profit organizations shall be considered for posting of a link on CPS Website and school listservs . Each organization must submit documentation evidencing their current non-profit status.**
- 5) Websites must contain appropriate language and images suitable for schoolchildren and their families.**
- 6) Websites must not contain information that violates any other CPS policies (i.e. Wellness Policy, etc.).**
- 7) Organizations whose links are not approved by the Assistant Superintendent (or his/her designee) may appeal to the Cranston School Committee for approval to post to the CPS Website and listserv. This appeal must be made in writing to the Chairperson of the Cranston School Committee.**
- 8) Cranston Public Schools website shall contain a disclaimer stating that neither the Cranston Public Schools, nor the Cranston School Committee, are in any way endorsing any of the organizations, events or youth related activities by virtue of allowing their links to be posted on the website or listserv.**

First Reading: January 22, 2013 Cranston Public Schools

Resolution 13-1-15 Cranston, Rhode Island

Policy Adopted: January 31, 2012

Resolution No. 13-1-18

Administrator's Compensation Schedule

Fiscal Year 2012-2013

NAME	POSITION	SCHOOL	ANN	SALARY
HEALTH DENTAL LIFE PENSION SURV				
BEN OASDI MEDICARE TOTAL Fringe Sal & Fringe				

Caporelli, Mary*	Principal	Waterman	35,877.00	5789 419 14	5,026
43 0 520	11,812	47,689			

Administrator's Compensation Schedule

Fiscal Year 2013-2014

NAME	POSITION	SCHOOL	ANN	SALARY
HEALTH DENTAL LIFE PENSION SURV				
BEN OASDI MEDICARE TOTAL Fringe Sal & Fringe				

Caporelli, Mary	Principal	Waterman	88,000.00	18491 1182 33
13,077	96 0 1276	34,155	122,155	

***Based upon an effective date of 2/1/2013.**